

# **Georgia Community Mobilization Initiative Mid-Term Evaluation Report**

## **Submitted to:**

Care International/ Georgia  
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Assessment Team

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W-GCMI Mid-Term Evaluation

## Review

### West Georgia Community Mobilization Initiative

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#### **I. Background**

In September 2000, CARE International in the Caucasus (CARE) initiated the West Georgia Community Mobilization (WGCM) project funded by USAID to enhance the capacity of communities to become more pro-active in addressing their own needs and attaining self-reliance. The overall goal of West GCM is to contribute directly and quantitatively toward the “*reduction of suffering for vulnerable and isolated groups and communities*” for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local residents throughout Western Georgia. The four year intervention currently targets 300 rural and peri-urban communities located within the following geographic areas: Imereti, Samegrelo Upper/Lower Svaneti, Guria, Racha–Lechkhumi and Adjara.

The program promotes levels of participation through the formation and/or strengthening of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) who are responsible for mobilizing community members to identify and address existing (and evolving) priority needs identified by local residents. Once potential interventions are identified, participating CBOs prepare project proposals that are submitted for funding under WGCM's umbrella grant mechanism for Micro-Projects (approximately \$6,000-7,000) and Small Projects (approximately \$15,000-20,000). In addition, the program administers a larger competitive bid grant scheme (RFA model) ranging from \$30,000-\$45,000 for local NGO activities in order to support and strengthen their capacity to implement a range of sectoral interventions within targeted vulnerable communities. The program is implemented in direct partnership with the International Medical Corps (IMC) who is responsible for technical backstopping and operational support for Health and Social Welfare related interventions, and with Horizonti, a local NGO responsible for social policy and civic participation initiatives within the WGCM target area. The program is attempting to facilitate the development of innovative partnerships and linkages across diverse stakeholders (communities, governmental agencies, local & international non governmental organizations and the private sector) in an effort to improve the provision of basic services and economic growth among vulnerable communities.

Although CARE-Georgia possesses extensive program experience related to Community Mobilization and Micro-Project implementation in western Georgia, WGCM management acknowledges the need for reviewing a range of strategic and procedural aspects of the Community Mobilization, Micro-Project and RFA components. As a result, CARE engaged the services of an external consultant, prior to a formal mid-term evaluation, to review the general components of the program in an effort to identify specific recommendations toward strengthening implementation and quality aspects during the remaining program cycle. The review was undertaken with the direct participation of WGCM program staff, partners, CBO/NGO participants, and senior CARE managers.

The WGCM program faced a series of difficulties during the first year start-up phase associated to: (1) initial recruitment and (2) multiple transitions of senior managers including the Chief of Party, Grant Manager and Community Mobilization Manager

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causing delays in the establishment of the program's final operational strategies/ procedures and the subsequent rescheduling of Community Mobilization, Micro-Project and RFA interventions at the field level. However, since a full and stable management team had been assembled, WGCMI progressed rapidly and has successfully mobilized over 110 Community Based Organizations (CBOs), approved funding for 91 Community Projects (Micro Projects & Small Projects), completed 45 Community Projects, continues to oversee the finalization of 46 additional Community Projects, designed/issued 2 competitive RFA to local NGOs (Community Mobilization & -Social Protection) and awarded grants to 3 local NGOs.

It should be noted that although WGCMI component has produced numerous other achievements to date and possesses many positive attributes (e.g. trained field staff, negotiated numerous operational agreements, established a series of control/monitoring systems, achieved high levels of community contributions, etc.) this report will only focus on observations and recommendations related to strengthening the overall strategic and procedural aspects of the community mobilization initiatives.

## **II. Evaluation Process**

The following activities were undertaken (by the consultant) as part of the review process:

- Detailed review of general project related documents including: Project Proposal, Best and Final responses, Semi-Annual Report, Output-Target modification, correspondence, Stakeholder Conference and various workshop reports and other related WGCMI correspondence.
- Review of operational manuals and formats including: Community Mobilization Operational Guidelines, Request for Application (RFA) Instructions and Recipient Handbook for Medium and Large Grant Awards.
- Interviews with senior CARE managers and WGCMI staff including:
  - CARE-Caucasus Mission Director (Tbilisi)
  - CARE-Caucasus Finance Manager (Tbilisi)
  - WGCMI Chief of Party (Tbilisi)
  - WGCMI Grants Manager (Kutaisi)
  - WGCMI Community Mobilization Manager (Kutaisi)
  - WGCMI Liaison Officer (Tbilisi)
  - WGCMI Senior Mobilization Specialist (Kutaisi)
  - Community Mobilizers (Imereti, Samegrelo & Guria)
  - Grant Officers (Imereti, Samegrelo & Guria)
  - Quality Assurance Engineer
- Interviews with partner organizations including:
  - IMC Country Director/WGCMI Health & Social Work Manager (Kutaisi)

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- IMC/WGCMi Public Health Officer (Kutaisi)
  - IMC/WGCMi Environmental Health Officer (Kutaisi)
  - IMC/WGCMi Information, Education & Communication Officer (Kutaisi)
  - Horizonti – Social Policy Advisor & Social Policy Initiative Group (Kutaisi)
- Interviews with participants/non-participants of RFA process including:
    - Atinati Director, Deputy Director & Agricultural Project Manager (Samegrelo)
    - CAA & Tamari Directors & Field Staff (Samegrelo)
    - Avangardi Director (Samegrelo)
    - Association for Disabled Children, Parents and Women (Samegrelo)
    - Grassroots Support Center (Samegrelo)
    - Abkhazintercont (Samegrelo)
    - VTJC (Imereti)
    - HBI (Guria)
  - Site visits to WGCMi communities: (CBO interviews & review of works)

REGION	DISTRICT	COMMUNITY	PROJECT	CYCLE
Imereti	Khoni	District Center	Youth Center Rehabilitation	I
Imereti	Bagdadi	Nergeeti	School Rehabilitation	II
Imereti	Bagdadi	Obcha	Road Rehabilitation	II
Imereti	Samtredia	Melauri	Gymnasium Rehabilitation	I
Samegrelo	Martvili	Najakhao	Ambulatory Rehabilitation	I
Samegrelo	Abasha	Zanati	School Rehabilitation	II
Samegrelo	Tsalanjika	Sachino	Water System Repair	I
Samegrelo	Tsalanjika	Sachanao	School Rehabilitation	I
Samegrelo	Zudidi	Kulishkari	Road & Bridge Rehab.	I
Guria	Lanchkuti	Jurukveti	School Rehabilitation	I
Guria	Ozergeti	Bakhvi	Ambulatory Rehabilitation	II
Guria	Ozergeti	Sroma	Electrical Rehabilitation	I

### **III. Attainment of Intermediate Result Indicators**

Strategic Objective 3.1 - Reduced human suffering in targeted Communities

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Intermediate Result 3.1.2 - Vulnerable communities meet own needs

Intermediate Result 3.1.2.1 - Increased capacity to deliver health and other services

**Proposed Life of Project Outputs & Achievements of WGCMI (as of June 1, 2002)**

(Source: Project Proposal, WGCMI/USAID Communications, Semi-Annual Report, project data base)

Outputs	LOP Target	Actual	%
# of vulnerable individuals w/ improved access to basic services (SO 3.1)	550,000	168,766	31%
# of direct beneficiaries receiving services from activities under IR 3.1.2.1	410,000	116,467*	28%
# of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) formed and/or strengthened (IR 3.1.2)	300	111	37%
# of Community Projects approved for funding - MPs and SPs (IR 3.1.2)	550	91	16%
# of Community Projects completed – MPs & SPs (IR 3.1.2)	550	85	15%
\$US value of local contributions to MPs & SPs ( IR 3.1.2.1)	888,730	369,314*	41%
# of RFA grant issued to Local NGOs	25	3	12%

\* Figure includes community projects that have been completed and that are currently in progress.

The WGCMI program faced a series of difficulties during the first year start-up phase associated to: (1) initial recruitment of senior staff members and (2) multiple transitions of senior managers including the Chief of Party, Grant Manager and Community Mobilization Manager. This subsequently caused delays in the establishment of the program's final operational strategies/ procedures and the subsequent rescheduling of Community Mobilization, Micro-Project and RFA interventions at the field level.

It appears that the original program design was very ambitious and the initial constraints related to the program start-up compounded the challenges to meet all anticipated program activities/outputs. In addition, the WGCMI senior management team and USAID had also identified that in order to increase the impact of community based initiatives, more resources needed to be reallocated toward Micro-Projects. As a result, USAID had recently approved the following changes in activities/output indicators:

Activity/Output–Life of Project	Original Proposal	Revised (April 2002)
# of CBOs to be formed	400	300
# of Community projects funded	630 (SPs + MPs)	550 (SPs + MPs)
# of CBOs implementing 1 project	380	300
# of SPs/MPs	140/490	50/500
Ave grant size for SPs/MPs	\$15,000/\$4,025	\$15,000/\$6,500
# of NGO RFAs	15	25
# grant size for SP	\$75,000	\$45,000

In addition to modifying the Community Mobilization component, it was also decided to increase the number of NGO RFAs and reduce the average grant amount(s) due to the #

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of eligible local NGOs competing for a limited number of grants and their respective capacity to adequately manage the larger grant levels.

Observations: Given the initial delays encountered (the program is estimated to be 9 months behind its original planned implementation schedule) WGCMI has effectively achieved accelerated progress toward the Community Mobilization, Micro & Small Project development/implementation and the initiation of the local NGO targeted RFA process. However, the current workload is severely stretching the capacity of the WGCMI staff (especially field staff) to meet the planned outputs and indicators set forth in the program. As a result, the program is becoming more and more focused on reaching output targets (e.g. # of communities mobilized, # of MP completed, etc.) as compared to the longer-term objective of capacity building of local CBOs. The field teams are assigned a high number of CBOs to support, in some cases in excess of 25 communities simultaneously. Given this case load, a Community Mobilizer (CM) can only visit a given community twice per month after the completion of the initially community development training/MP proposal development process, and then once per month thereafter for follow-up activities including; monitoring of maintenance plans, 6 month strategic planning, support toward the development of a 2<sup>nd</sup> MP, etc. Based on discussions with CBOs and WGCMI field staff, it appears that communities will still require more continuous support and “consultation” in order to support CBOs capacity building beyond the first cycle. In order to achieve this, CMs/GOs will need to invest more time with any given CBO.

One step already taking by WGCMI senior managers to reduce the workload on the Community Mobilizers, was issuing a RFA for local NGOs to undertake mobilization responsibilities of approximately 75 new communities/CBOs and initiated a tender for Enhancement and Empowerment Initiative for CBOs targeted at LNGO and Ltd companies. This will reduce increasing the workload of the CMs, but will not fully resolve the issue described above. In addition, the Grant Officers are also overwhelmed as they are still responsible for the proposal development/review and MP monitoring for the WGCMI and NGO RFA communities which is reducing their time available to provide on-going capacity building to participating CBOs and NGOs.

In general, the WGCMI managers and field staff are confident that the number communities to be mobilized (currently 300) is achievable under the current modality, however, there are doubts by all involved that the 550 community projects (500 MPs and 50 SPs) can be achieved during the 4 year program cycle. One primary reason for this concern is due fact that MPs take longer to implement than originally anticipated. Certain variables attributing to delays in MP completion are beyond the control of the WGCMI staff including; weather, availability of electricity, unforeseen technical issues, increased community contributions required as a result of unforeseen technical issues, etc.

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However, there are other aspects attributing to the delay of MP completion or the initiation of subsequent community projects including: bank transfers, final reconciliation of MPs, a three month waiting period between projects, schedule for MP reviews, etc. These issues are well within the program's ability to adjust in order to increase the pace of MP implementation and subsequent MP/SP project development. As mentioned earlier, the overall design appears (to this consultant) to be extremely ambitious. Although there are ample resources allocated to the MP/SP and RFA activities, it does appear that the level of resources allocated to WGCMI in terms of time, staffing and other direct program operations (technical assistance, logistics, equipment, etc.) compared to the operational strategy (e.g. direct delivery of services), anticipated coverage of communities and longer-term capacity building objectives of CBOs/NGOs is inconsistent.

Prior to considering the further reduction of targets and/or a time extension, there are a series of steps that should be considered in order improve operational efficiency of program activities. Once the program has selected its realignment strategies (e.g. implementing selected recommendations presented in this report), CARE and USAID will need to seriously assess the necessity of reallocating resources within the existing program budget to support proposed interventions. The upcoming external mid-term evaluation will be an appropriate opportunity to determine whether WGCMI can achieve its intended plan or whether additional resources, reducing targets and/or extending the time frame of this community mobilization intervention will be required in order to achieve the final negotiated outputs and objectives

It is important to acknowledge that given the nature of this program, there are strong interrelationships between the different WGCMI components. Particular actions/ interventions taken to resolve problematic issues in one area of the project will have a direct effect on other aspects within that specific component or on different components of the program. For example: attempting to dedicate more CM staff time toward on-going CBO capacity building will restrict the number of communities each CM can reach, or introducing the Community Mobilization NGO RFA has reduced the workload for the CMs but has increased the workload of the Grant Officers by significantly raising the number of communities to be monitored, and that the MP proposal development/review process for NGO mobilized communities has become more time consuming than WGCMI internally mobilized proposals.

#### Recommendations:

- (1) Reduce the number of projects assigned to CMs and increase the amount of time spent providing on-going capacity building to CBOs associated to ensuring sustainability of completed projects and development of subsequent MPs/SPs. CMs should visit CBOs (at any phase of the program) a **MINIMUM** of 2 times per months.

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- (2) Add more CMs to the WGCMI team, potentially doubling the current size of the mobilization team. At the very least, replace the human resources (e.g. IMC staff recently reassigned to another role) who were covering CM responsibilities. Under this scenario, the new CMs could handle their own communities as opposed to the IMC staff who worked in tandem with existing CMs. **(It should be noted here that CMs have not been taking their allotted vacations due to the present workload.)**
- (3) Issue more NGO RFAs for Community Mobilization to reduce the load of new CBO mobilization and development training assigned to the existing WGCMI CM team.
- (4) Add MP & SP monitoring responsibilities to NGO RFAs for Community Mobilization. This will reduce the caseload on the CMs/GOs and also increase the capacity of local NGOs to develop stronger skills with the implementation and monitoring of MPs/SMs in diverse sectoral areas.
- (5) An alternative to the above, consider fully eliminating the role of new community mobilization for WGCMI staff and thus the CMs would concentrate only on the follow-up strategic planning, sustainability monitoring and 2<sup>nd</sup> MP proposal development for the 85 internally mobilized and the balance of RFA NGO mobilized communities.
- (6) Add Grant Officers to the WGCMI team (actual number not defined) in order to handle the growing number of MP financial/compliance monitoring as well as increasing responsibilities related to NGO RFA development and compliance monitoring.
- (7) Issue NGO RFAs for MP/SP financial monitoring & compliance to reduce the caseload of GOs. Under this scenario, local NGOs would be contracted to monitor finance & compliance related to MPs/SP implemented/monitored by other local NGOs. This would also be considered part of NGO capacity building and improve their own ability to meet donor compliance requirements for future grants.
- (8) A combination of all the above.

**See recommendations for reducing delays associated to MP development and implementation in the following sections of this report.**

#### **IV. Areas Identified for Strengthening**

##### **1.0 Community Mobilization**

##### **1.1 Strengthen on-going capacity building of CBOs**

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Observations: Although the CM teams invest significant time and effort in the initial mobilization, community development training and MP proposal stages, the ability for many CBOs to develop a 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal independently, meeting the WGCMI Proposal Review Committee requirements is questionable. Given that WGCMI is evolving and periodically updating and changing its procedures and criteria it is important to keep the CBO informed. Based on conversations with CBO members, it is apparent that they rely on “consultations” (at varying levels) during the 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal development process although this is considered an “externally” prepared proposal. Potentially, if the CBOs had more consistent contact with the CMs & GOs, the quality of their proposals could improve and the timeframe for proposal development could also be shortened. Currently the CMs are averaging 3 days a week in the field either visiting MP projects underway or providing on-going support through the development of 6 month strategic plans, monitoring maintenance activities and providing “consultations” for the development of their 2<sup>nd</sup> MP proposals. Taking into consideration the large number communities covered (a CM in Imereti covers approximately 28 communities and a CM in Samegrelo covers approximately 22 communities), the average frequency of visits is reduced to 1 or 2 times/month and more likely to be 1 time/month after the finalization of the 1<sup>st</sup> MP. This is not sufficient if WGCMI is trying to build the skills of CBOs and quickly motivate them to independently prepare future proposals, and identify alternative sources of funding beyond the WGCMI intervention. In some cases, field staff stated that they visit up to 4 projects in a day, but the average appeared to be closer to 2 visits per day. Given the time currently dedicated toward travel (up to 3-4+hours/day), it is not likely that it is possible to undertake 4 substantive visits per day when traveling from Kutaisi or Samegrelo offices.

#### Recommendations:

- (1) Attempt to increase the frequency of CM visits to CBOs when MP activities have been suspended due to poor weather conditions and/or after the finalization of MP implementation activities.
- (2) Attempt to organize the schedule of field staff to spend 4 days a week in the field. Although this will not always be possible the current tendency is to spend on average 2 days a week in the office.
- (3) Evaluate the possibility of having field staff overnight in the regions (either village or nearest district centers) 2 nights a week in order to reduce the time dedicated to travel and maximize the number of substantive visits per day. According to Senior Mobilization Specialist this procedure was utilized by the Mtebi project in western Georgia. This may significantly reduce the fuel costs as well as wear and tear on the rented/owned vehicles.

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(The combination of recommendation #2 & #3 could potentially increase the # of communities a CM can adequately handle approximately 16 communities (3 visits/day (average) x 4 days/week x 4 weeks/month / 3 visits/community/month = 16 communities)

- (4) Put more emphasis on motivating CBOs to initiate 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal development as part of the strategic planning process.
- (5) Ensure that each monitoring/mobilization visit to the CBO/monitoring has an element of re-enforcement related to the Enhancement and Empowerment Initiative training. In addition attempt to focus on additional organizational skills including: document management, negotiation skills, identification of other donors, maintenance/sustainability plan implementation, etc.

#### 1.2 Review and revise CM monitoring reports

Observations: According to CMs, they fill-out a standardized monitoring report for each community site visit. The CM collects information related to MP progress, material utilization and general observations. These reports are submitted to the Senior Community Mobilization Manager for review and the information supposedly consolidated for overall reporting for the semi-annual reports. It also appears that this report is also used as a monitoring tool to track the movement of the CMs. The volume of reports being generated is approximately 150 reports/month (averaging 6 reports/week/CM x 7 CM x 4 weeks/month = 168 reports/month). The report is tracking the overall progress of individual MPs, includes resource utilization and identifies any important observations and/or irregularities. Although it is very important to document the site visits, and maintain the Community Mobilization Manager and Specialist informed about project progress and qualitative issues, it appears that much of the quantitative information included in the report is already available in other project related documentation. In addition, it appears that the quantitative information (material values, community contributions, Person Days of labor) summarized on the monitoring report is more theoretical than actual. For example the monitors are calculating values of work output or material consumption based on unit prices in the budget and not actual costs. According to the CMs the actual data collected for the semi-annual comes from other document sources.

#### Recommendations:

- (1) The Community Mobilization Specialist and Manager should define what information is required for their monitoring purposes and simplify the format. This should reduce time spent on the reports and reduce paper consumption.
- (2) WGCMI may want to consider reducing the reporting requirement to a monthly basis as given the expansion of project activities the actual number of report to be generated may be too voluminous for efficient tracking of MP progress.

- (3) Alternative mechanisms can be utilized to track/verify staff movements including vehicle logs, TERs, or other simplified register format apart from the CM monitoring report.

### **1.3 Micro-Project documents not always present with CBOs**

Observations: On several occasions key Micro-Project related documents including financial formats, agreements, MP proposals were not available at the CBO offices. This most often occurred with visits to closed projects, in which the CBO members explained that the WGCMi staff had collected the documentation for their files.

In other cases, where project documents did exist, CBO members requested that WGCMi leaves the original receipts for all financial transactions associated to the MP in their possession in order to avoid difficulties with the tax authorities. WGCMi staff are rightfully and cautiously not leaving original receipts and other financial documents with the CBO.

Recommendations:

- (1) It is very important that the CM/GO ensures that the CBO maintains organized records from the Micro-Projects (especially closed projects) including project proposals, authorization letters from local authorities, any technical plans (if they exist) and financial records. These documents will serve as reference materials for the CBOs when they attempt to prepare a 2<sup>nd</sup> project proposal and implement their second project.
- (2) CARE should continue to maintain original receipts (only for items purchased with donor funds) and reconciliation reports.
- (3) The Grants Manager should determine which other (if any) financial documents should be retained by CARE for donor audit reasons during the up coming USAID compliance training. All other document should be left with the CBOs.
- (4) The WGCMi Chief of Party and Community Mobilization Manager should determine what documents (apart from project proposals, contracts and MP completion forms) are required for WGCMi files and all other non essential documents for CARE's accountability purposes should be left with the CBOs.
- (5) In the event that WGCMi requires any original documents, it should ensure that a copy is left in the possession of the CBO.

### **1.4 More focus on realistic sustainability planning during the initial mobilization training process**

Observations: To date, the vast majority of MPs center on infrastructure rehabilitation initiatives. Although all projects include sustainability/maintenance plans, it appears that

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many of these plans have been developed in order to meet proposal requirements, and are not always detailed/functional/realistic. For example: most plans identify “collecting money from the community” as the primary function for ensuring that pending repairs not covered by any given MP are completed, as well as the primary source of funds for future maintenance repairs. In some cases, there are no clear plans (timing, amounts required, etc) for the termination of pending works that are required (in the short-term) to protect the repair works completed by the MP prior to the initiation of the winter/wet season. In addition, it appears that the post MP resources planning and implementation process are not always occurring as planned. This calls into question whether sufficient attention is being placed on sustainability planning as a realistic mechanism for ensuring ongoing utility of completed MP works as well as the sufficient capacity building of CBO to address issues of financial and operational sustainability of their future CBO interventions.

Recommendations:

- (1) Strengthen the concepts/importance of sustainability planning within the initial community development training and initial MP design process.
- (2) Ensure that sustainability plans are realistic and represent more than just a requirement of a MP proposal.
- (3) Operationalize sustainability plans as part of the MP implementation process. Do not wait until the MPs are completed before addressing the sustainability process.
- (4) Ensure that CBOs do not begin focusing on the mobilization of community resources for MP #2, prior to addressing pending issues associated to MP#1.

**1.5 CMs should more actively guide community/CBO plans prior to finalizing MP designs**

Observations: The initial mobilization process has been very effective in terms problem identification, prioritization and assisting the CBOs to develop their project(s) based on the priority selected. However, when it comes to the selection of potential activities to be implemented, the mobilization teams are not necessarily assertive enough in pointing out deficiencies in these plans in terms of rational use of MP resources or the ultimate improvement of service provision as a result of the MP. For example, a CBO decides to rehabilitate an entire ambulatory building (7 rooms), even though there is only one attending physician who receives an average of 5-7 patients per day.

The project results with nicely repaired building, but most rooms are not in service due to the lack of some basic furnishings & equipment as opposed to fully rehabilitating and furnishing a smaller number of rooms that will immediately provide improved services to the community.

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Recommendations:

- (1) The CM team should more actively guide discussions and challenge (if necessary) proposed MP activities in order to achieve increased impact of completed MP interventions.
- (2) The CM team should attempt to help CBOs focus on activities that will benefit communities immediately, and avoid allowing infrastructure repairs activities that are focused on potential benefits in the “future” (e.g. repairing the floor of a room, but not addressing the windows, walls, doors, etc., under the auspices that the rest of the repairs will be completed by the community in the undefined future).
- (3) Although it is not the role of the CM team to make decisions for the CBOs in terms of priorities and general MP interventions, it may be required (when deemed necessary) that the CM team assertively advises the CBO on eliminating or adding activities in order to improve the impact of proposed MPs.

## **2.0 Micro-Project Component**

### **2.1 Potential steps to accelerate the start-up of new MPs**

Observations: As noted previously, one of the major challenges faced by WGCMI is the successful implementation of 550 community projects (Micro Projects and Small Projects). Currently, the program faces a series of constraints that are slowing down the process of new MP development & new MP start-ups. Specific issues contributing to potential delays associated to new MP start-ups are:

**Technical Assistance** - In terms of first cycle MP development (WGCMI and LNGO mobilized) specialized support in terms of technical design/budgeting is weak at the community level. Internally mobilized MPs continue to rely on limited number WGCMI Community Mobilizers (who happen to be Engineers) to provide technical guidance and support. Externally mobilized projects (either independent or NGO mobilized) are struggling to obtain the appropriate technical support. As a result, the MP design process is slower than desired and the final review/approval process is prolonged due to required technical/budgetary modifications as a result of insufficient technical support from the onset. Recently WGCMI hired a Quality Assurance Engineer (QAE) who has assumed the primary role (among others) of MP pre-assessment that are numerous and time consuming. It is clear that current (1) QAE will not meet the growing needs of timely technical support for MP pre-assessments and technical problem solving.

Recommendations:

- (1) Increase the number of Quality Assurance Engineers by 2 in order to adequately cover the growing number of projects and geographic coverage of then program. (QAE #1 - Samegrelo/Svanetia, QAE #2 – Imereti/Racha &

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QAE #3 – Guria/Adjara). This will support the sourcing of appropriate technical assistance for the internally mobilized MP designs and accelerate the process of MP technical pre-assessment and budget reviews. **Note: given the role of the QAEs (MP technical reviews, field assessments, implementation progress monitoring and final quality assessment) this position should not be directly involved in the MP technical design development.**

- (2) Add a technical assistance budget line item to future Community Mobilization RFAs in order to ensure that NGOs responsible for developing internally mobilized MPs have resources to access appropriate assistance for complex technical issues. The provision of technical assistance on the behalf of the NGO should only be provided when the CBO has demonstrated that it can not mobilize the appropriate technical resources within the community and/or local authorities.
- (3) Consider developing a tender (with LNGO or LTD) for the provision of technical services for more complex infrastructure interventions (high voltage electrification, bridges, Gabions, etc). This type of technical assistance could be provided in the event that WGCMI is willing to cover the technical aspects of internally mobilized MPs of a complex technical nature, or for receiving technical services related to MP pre-assessments/budget reviews for areas beyond the expertise of the QAEs.
- (4) Eliminate MP budget translation responsibilities (Georgia-to-English) from the QAE and sub-contract the translations on a piecework basis (per budget) to university students, ex-CASSIN Engineers and/or other technicians with the appropriate technical English skills. Given the number of MPs to be developed at one time, the program may need to identify one (1) person per region. This will allow the QAE(s) to dedicate more time to the pre-assessment and budget review activities.

**Three month bridging period** – WGCMI has established an internal three 3 month waiting period for communities/CBOs between MP projects in order to: evaluate CBO performance in relation of implementation of maintenance/sustainability plans and allow time for CBO/community strategic planning and additional training prior to initiating the development of the second MP. In theory, the provision of the Three month waiting period makes perfect sense in terms of CBO capacity building. However, this strategy is not compatible with the MP project implementation targets over the next 2 years.

Taking into consideration that it takes a CBO approximately 1 month to develop and MP (the actual timeframe varies due the size, scope and type of intervention) it currently takes a minimum of 4 months before a given CBO is ready y to submit a MP to the WGCMI review committee after the finalization of their 1<sup>st</sup> MP. In addition, the fact that until now most MPs are generally infrastructure related, and given the seasonal/time limitations for construction activities (especially in the

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mountainous regions), many CBOs which have finished their first project during late spring/early summer have missed the window of opportunity to develop and implement a 2<sup>nd</sup> during the 2002 summer period.

Recommendations:

- (1) Eliminate the 3 month waiting period requirement for development and implementation of subsequent MPs. In terms of motivating maintenance activities and finalizing the 1<sup>st</sup> MP financial reconciliation, etc., this can be achieved by ensuring that the CBO understands that these are pre-qualification requirements for the 2<sup>nd</sup> MP's approval.
- (2) Include the development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MP in the follow-up CBO training and strategic planning process.

**MP Review Cycle** - The MP Grant Review cycles for internally mobilized MP are flexible and scheduled based on the community mobilization activities and the receipt of MP proposals. Under this strategy the internally mobilized communities do not face significant delays in terms of having their proposal review/approval process. However, for externally developed/unsolicited proposals, the review committee schedule is based on a fixed calendar per cycle. Given the growing number of external (2<sup>nd</sup> MPs) & unsolicited proposals, the potential for MPs proposal to accumulate until the next review committee cycle could attribute to future delays in the approval of proposals. This may become a critical issue for MP proposals submitted in the spring and summer months that may need to wait up to 1 month (+) until scheduled review cycle. These MPs may experience problems (due to additional delay issues) related to conflicts with other season activities and/or missing the window of opportunity due to seasonal weather conditions.

Recommendations:

- (1) Consider increasing the frequency of external/unsolicited MP reviews to a monthly basis. This should speed up the turnaround time of MP approvals and reduce the number of proposals to be evaluated by the review committee at anyone time
- (2) Include the review of any submitted external/unsolicited proposals when the committee reviews internally mobilized proposals.
- (3) If the event that either monthly reviews are not possible due to other competing responsibilities or that the number of proposals become too numerous, consider setting up 2 parallel review committees to split the workload. GCMI could split up the core review committee members and add different members to each respective team including the AMD

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program, IMC HSW Coordinator and/or representatives from other International NGOs.

**Bank Transfers** – Difficulties experienced with the timely transfer/disbursement of funds to CBOs after the approval of their MP proposals have attributed to the delays in project start-ups. Taking into consideration that the initial fund transfer is typical used for the procurement of materials, the absence of funds precludes the initiation of these MPs. This problem has been more acute in Samegrelo and Guria than in Imereti due to the absence of efficient/functioning banking operations. It appears that delays associated to this issue will be more acute in the expanded geographic project areas such as Svanetia and Racha.

Recommendations:

- (1) At a senior level, provide notification to the bank president(s) that unfortunately CARE is not satisfied with their services (delays in transfers registering on the books, absence of cash at bank branches, delays in documentation, etc.) and that CARE has no choice but to cancel use of their services, and will ask its CBOs to close its accounts. In the event that any of the banks express serious interest in maintaining CARE's business, WGCMCI could provide a probation period for improvement (approximately one month). If the services do not improve, or improve but then declines again, CARE should cancel its service relationship with the respective banks.
- (2) WGCMCI should consider shifting all its CBO related banking to the TBC bank based on its past performance. In most cases, CBOs will be willing to travel to Kutaisi and or Poti in order to receive their funds on time. Under this scenario travel costs for a private transport should be built into the MP budget to cover the additional expenses.
- (3) In areas where access is difficult, where no other feasible banking alternatives exist and/or CBOs are not able/willing to travel as far as Kutaisi/Poti (where TBC operates), consider the option of cash delivery service by TCB. In an effort to maintain security levels for CBO members, WGCMCI could make arrangements to have TBC deliver funds to CBOs at alternative sites (outside their communities) such as Zudidi, Ozergeti, Batumi, etc.

## **2.2 Potential steps to reduce delays in the finalization of existing MPs**

Observations: In addition to the issue raised related to delays in MP start-ups, WGCMCI faces a series of constraints that are impeding the process of MP implementation and final

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closure. Delays in MP completions will continue to be a major critical factor related to WGCMI's ability to reach its current target (550 MPs/SPs) by the end of the four year program cycle. There are issues that are beyond the control of the WGCMI including: bad weather, sporadic access to electricity, delays in local authority contributions, delays in service provision by sub-contracted service providers, unforeseen technical issues, additional community contributions required as a result of unforeseen technical issues, etc. However, as with the start-up of MPs, there are areas in which WGCMI can influence to assist in minimizing MP related implementation delays including:

**Technical Planning** – Based on experience, it is clear that if technical plans are not complete or accurate, there are usually problems encountered in relation to the timely implementation of activities. Particular issues related either sufficient (rather insufficient) budgeting and/or encountering unforeseen problems do occur. For example, unforeseen/unplanned issues related to material, transport and labor needs often puts pressure on CBOs to mobilize additional community contributions or requires an additional allocation of resources from other sources (including WGCMI) which adds time to the implementation time frame.

**Recommendations:**

- (1) Expand the integration of Quality Assurance Engineers in strengthening the MP pre-assessment process. Especially for more complex interventions (electrification, water systems, bridges, Gabions, roads, etc.,) to avoid commonly unforeseen “surprises”. Consider eliminating complex project as potential MP if the CBOs can not mobilize the appropriate technical assistance as part of the design process.
- (2) Ensure that MP implementation plans are realistic. Previously, CBOs had developed MP implementation plans based on a maximum implementation period of 3 months (because that was the standard set forth in the project proposal). Given the experience to date, future MPs implementation plans should be based on actual needs and also take into consideration specific variables related to season, weather, electricity, availability of appropriate materials (example: “Dry” wood), amount of time it takes for cement to set in winter months and other issues that have resulted with the delays in MP completion.
- (3) See recommendations related to technical assistance in the previous section of this report.

**Reconciliation of Financial Documents** – Delays with the reconciliation of financial documents also contributes to extending the implementation period for MPs. This becomes a critical issue when a given MP's 2<sup>nd</sup> disbursement of funds is delayed due to problems with reconciliation's. This becomes a critical issue if the MP requires these funds for the procurement of additional materials. These delays are typically caused by a series of reasons including: errors in documents

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requiring that the documents be totally re-written, absence of supporting documents (receipts, bank statements, etc.) and caseload of Grant Officers restricting the availability of time to review/approve a given reconciliation.

It should be noted that the delays with the “final reconciliation” will be a contributing factor toward the hold-up of subsequent MP start-ups. In addition, this situation (delays with intermediate & final MP reconciliation’s) is causing significant concerns/problems related to the overall program’s financial management, due to significant outstanding advances (estimated at \$135,000 in May 2002) and the associated cost of capital.

Recommendations:

- (1) Attempt to organize the GOs schedule of spend more time in the field to oversee MP reconciliation issues. Evaluate the possibility of having GOs staff overnight in the regions order to reduce the time dedicated to travel and maximize the number reconciliation visits per day.
- (2) Place higher priority toward the reconciliation of MPs than other GOs responsibilities.
- (3) Review the overall caseload of GOs, consider whether addition staff will be required to cover a growing number of MP projects & NGO RFAs that will require financial monitoring and/or consider a RFA for financial monitoring and compliance.
- (4) CMs and GOs should dedicate more time and attention to ensuring that all required documents (especially receipts) for financial reconciliation are present and correct during regular monitoring visits. This should ensure that all required documentation is available prior to a scheduled reconciliation visit.
- (5) Review the documentation requirements for any given reconciliation and determine whether any current requirements (non essential documentation) can be eliminated. For example, are bank statements absolutely necessary in order to approve a financial reconciliation?
- (6) Allow errors to be corrected on supporting documentation. In this manner, if CMs/GOs identify errors in the preparation of supporting documentation prepared by CBO members, allow corrections on the same format and have the attending WGCMI staff approve (initial & date) the changes made. This should reduce the time spent by GOs in communities waiting for CBOs to re-write documents and or delays associated to a required return visit by the GO to obtain the revised documentation..

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Senior WGCMI staff (GM & COP) in coordination with CARE Finance and USAID compliance representatives should determine which documents should not be altered/corrected (for example original receipts). The Grants Manager should attempt to clarify this issue during the up coming USAID compliance training.

- (7) In the event the GO team can demonstrate improvements toward a reduction in final MP reconciliation delays, based on the above recommendations, WGCMI should seriously consider making a single 100% disbursement to CBOs for micro-projects and maintaining a multi disbursement procedure for Small Projects. This would: (1) significantly reduce workload on GOs and Finance Department, (2) Reduce delays associated to 2<sup>nd</sup> bank transfers and (3) Allow CBOs to complete all procurement at initial stage of MP.
- (8) In the event that the above recommendation (#7) is not possible due to trust issues with new CBOs, consider the following options: (1) Allow the single disbursement system for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> MPs, or (2) Allow an increase of 1<sup>st</sup> transfer to cover 100% of material and associated transport cost as well as 50% labor requirements for all projects in order to complete all procurement at the initial phase of the MP.
- (9) Undertake research with CARE Atlanta and USAID related to the outstanding advances and “cost of capital” associated to this umbrella grant and other grant projects in order to determine financial mechanisms which will not impede the cash flow to WGCMI, nor incur additional costs to CARE.
- (10) Review and revise the final reconciliation approval form, specifically related to the number of approval signatures required by WGCMI.

**Bank Transfers/Services** – The final transfer (2<sup>nd</sup> transfer of funds) to CBO managed MPs has been problematic in Guria and Samagrela. In most cases, MPs require the final transfer to procure materials, but many MP activities have already been fully completed prior to the receipt of the final transfer. In these cases, the CBOs have negotiated credit with skilled laborers and suppliers to complete the projects without funds in hand. Although this is creative and shows determination on the behalf of CBOs to complete the MP, it sometimes puts them in an awkward position with the community members and creditors who desire prompt payment for their services. CBOs also face difficulties in obtaining bank statements and other account related documentation required for financial reconciliation.

In addition, CARE’s image has been tarnished as WGCMI has not been meeting its contractual agreements with the communities in terms of timely disbursement of funds. Under these conditions, WGCMI is not in the moral position to insist upon prompt reporting and/or preparation of pending financial reconciliation(s) as well as any other time bound commitments agreed upon by the participating CBOS.

Recommendations:

- (1) See section 2.1 – Potential steps to accelerate the start-up of new MPs / Bank Transfers
- (2) See section 2.2 - Potential steps to reduce delays in the finalization of existing MPs / Reconciliation of Financial Documents

### **2.3 Simplification and reduction of standard paperwork**

Observation: Most of the CBOs and WGCMI staff members interviewed indicated a desire to reduce the volume of paperwork related to the implementation of MPs. Although the CBOs said that they “can do” the paperwork, they believe that some of the documentation requirements are redundant and/or overly bureaucratic for the size and scope of their organization. WGCMI staff cited the need to produce 100% error free documentation with no visual corrections as the main constraint on the behalf of the CBOs to filling-out the paperwork.

Given that for many CBOs, this there first experience with many of the required control systems and associated documentation. It is unrealistic to assume that these nascent organizations will complete all the required documentation perfectly. The entire process is part of the capacity building initiative. Currently CBO members are reticent to complete documentation without the direct presence of a WGCMI staff member for fear that a minor error will result with a significant time investment to re-prepare the entire document. This is contrary to the concept of “learning by doing and learn from your mistakes” and does not promote the practice of timely preparation of documentation. This process consumes an inordinate amount of time of the behalf of field staff, who are waiting for CBO representatives fill-out documents during a site visit as compared to prior to a site visit. It should also be acknowledged that the CBO members also have other responsibilities and that re-writing documents may not be a good use of their time.

Recommendations:

- (1) The Grants Manager should determine which the current 21 formats currently used by CBOs are required and should retained by CARE for donor audit reasons during the up coming USAID compliance training. Allow errors to be corrected on supporting documentation without requiring that documents be reproduced.
- (2) Once CARE-Caucasus finalizes any planned changes related to financial, procurement and warehousing policies, WGCMI should undertake a comparative review of its document regime and adjust as required. As stated above, although CBOs should maintain primary control/documentation mechanisms, it should not be necessary for these grassroots organizations to replicate CARE systems. WGCMI should attempt to be flexible, and consult with USAID on this issue.

- (3) Upon the return of the Grants Manager from USAID compliance training, WGCMI should form a committee headed by the GO with representation of the CMs, GOs and Finance Department to review the current documentation packet and propose concrete changes in the documentation regime, especially to reduce redundancies of information collected. Although it may be possible to reduce some of the paperwork requirements, the staff should be aware that the reductions will be minimal.
- (4) More effort should be made to ensure that CBOs clearly understand why each control mechanism and associated documentation is required. This may reduce the feeling that they are investing vast amounts of time in preparing paperwork that serves no purpose beyond being a WGCMI requirement.

## **2.4 Consider modification of selection criteria for 2<sup>nd</sup> MPs and Small Projects**

Observations: The project has developed a series of selection criteria for follow-on MP and SP activities including the following:

- Successful completion of 1<sup>st</sup> Micro Project
- Completion of 3 month bridging period
- Demonstrated progress toward maintenance/sustainability plans
- Community contribution of 40%
- Completion of 6 month strategic plan.

Additional criteria for Small Projects:

- Serves multiple communities
- Advance common strategic need of multiple communities
- Proposed intervention builds networks (CBOs, local Gov't & private sector)

Although most of criteria established support the concept of promoting progressive community responsibilities and expands potential impact of WGCMI interventions (e.g. small projects), some of the existing criteria are actually slowing down the development of new MPs and potentially impede the development of Small projects. In addition, the criteria for Small Projects (in essence) begins to dictate terms for developing new projects, which may or may not be consistent with the interests and priorities previously identified during the community development training.

Recommendations:

- (1) Eliminate the 3 month waiting period requirement for development and implementation of subsequent MPs. In terms of motivating maintenance activities this can be achieved by putting more emphasis on this during the initial MP planning/implementation and by ensuring that the CBO

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understands that this will be a requirement for the 2<sup>nd</sup> MP approval. In addition, WGCMI should clearly communicate that it reserves the right to suspend the implementation the 2<sup>nd</sup> MP if field staff identify that maintenance for MP #1 is not functioning. (See section 2.1 – Potential steps to accelerate the start-up of new MPs for more detail)

- (2) Include the development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MP within the follow-up CBO training and strategic planning process. In this manner, all CBOs will have 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal ready immediately after the strategic planning process (e.g. speeds up process of proposal development).
- (3) For Small Projects, reduce the 40% community contributions to approximately 20-25%. Currently MPs have been very successful in obtaining community contributions well above the required 25% match (according to CM staff the overall average contribution is 39%). However, when taking into consideration the increased value of SPs (upwards of \$15,000-\$20,000) a 40% community contributions requirement in terms of \$US value increases substantially ( $\$15,000 \times 40\% = \$6,000$  /  $\$20,000 \times 40\% = \$8,000$ ). As a result, WGCMI may see a limited number of SPs being submitted over the next 2 years. In addition, WGCMI should take into consideration that the CBOs had already mobilized resources for the 1<sup>st</sup> MP (e.g. community tapped-out), and raising significantly higher levels of contributions (especially relying more on local authorities) may take an extended period of time. High levels of required contributions for SPs will also (most likely) result in overvaluation of community contributions in order to meet the match requirement.
- (4) WGCMI should consider eliminating multi community requirement for SPs. Promoting collaboration between various communities for a given SP enters into a series of different dynamics and may require significantly more time and effort on the behalf of WGCMI to develop. The ongoing maintenance of completed SPs becomes more complex and less likely to be successful as well. In addition, making this a requirement implies that WGCMI is potentially influencing the selection of activities that may not consistent with the priorities previously identified by the community.

If WGCMI considers this an important challenge (i.e. multi community MP/ SPs), it may want to evaluate multi community SPs as more desirable (e.g. more competitive as external submission) but not as a requirement.

- (5) The requirement “Proposed intervention builds networks (CBOs, local Gov’t & private sector)” is hard to quantify. How is this different than any other MP/SP? Does this mean private sector support is required? This criterion should either be reworded so that is clearly measurable in terms of “yes or no” or eliminated.

## **2.5 Define more clearly criteria for selection of roads projects**

The program is internally struggling to determine the appropriate selection criteria in terms of impact and cost benefit for potential road/transport related interventions. This has been raised due to the technical complexity, costs, anticipated benefits and future maintenance responsibilities associated to this type of MP.

### Recommendations:

- (1) CBOs should be encouraged to focus on roads that are inaccessible (when technically feasible) as opposed to roads that are “difficult to travel”. This will have higher levels of impact for communities that are more isolated in terms of agricultural productivity/marketing, communication, and access to basic services.
- (2) Given cost limitations of MPs, road projects should move away from resurfacing long stretches of roadway and focus more on problems that related to seasonal accessibility. This is typically related to controlling water flows that periodically restrict road access in the same places every year, thus requiring improved drainage canals, culverts, retaining walls, etc to protect existing road surfaces. In some cases, resurfacing specific (short stretches) of roads where soft material or steep inclines may also be acceptable. Years of traffic, weather and lack of maintenance have created stretches of uneven surfaces that continue to be accessible year round (although slow travel velocities are required). Attempting to level these road surfaces without proper topography, machinery (for compaction) and supervision support could (and most probably will) not be sustainable.
- (3) Establish more specific cost/utilization guidelines to be used within the project selection process to justify road improvement interventions (examples could include: defining acceptable cost ranges for cost/km or cost/family for repairs, # families/km, # families with increased access to agriculture production, # of communities linked to important services, minimum volume of traffic anticipated/cars per day or other more appropriate indicators as defined by WGCMI.) In other words do not invest heavily on roads that benefit a limited number of user and do not approve “roads to nowhere”.
- (4) Only consider road interventions that are not be too technically complex and where the MPs concretely include sufficient levels and timely access to technical supervision and machinery required to support long lasting repairs (Example: manual labor compaction or we will “find” the required machinery should not be acceptable.)

## **2.6 Incorporate formal quality assurance reviews promptly at the end of each project**

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Observations: Currently, MPs (especially internally mobilized ones) have been finalized without a formal/documented technical review of completed works by a source external to the implementation of the MP. This should be documented and form part of the final certificate of completion for each MP.

Recommendations:

- (1) The Quality Assurance Engineer should develop a 1-2 page Final Technical Assessment format that should summarize the final quantity and quality of works completed. The final evaluation should be based on previous site visits, review of documentation and a final “check-out visit”. The document should be signed by the QAE and CBO Chairman and attached to the Certificate of Completion.
- (2) Potential areas to be covered in the final technical evaluation include:
  - Are works completed (types & amounts of actual repairs) consistent with the approved budget and technical design. Please identify any irregularities
  - Are materials and labor unit costs actually expensed (procured) reasonable compared to local market values? Please identify any irregularities
  - Are equipment/machinery rental unit costs actually expensed (procured) reasonable compared to local market values? Please identify any irregularities
  - Is the quality of materials procured/utilized by communities of acceptable quality standards? Please identify any sub-standard materials utilized
  - Does the quality of works completed meet minimum construction standards as required by local Authorities/Government Standards? (i.e. Ministry of Urbanization & Construction)
  - Are community members satisfied with the quantity & quality of works completed? If no, please specify problems identified

### **3.0 RFA Process**

#### **3.1 Review and revise process for the design of future NGO RFAs**

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Observations: WGCMI has successfully designed and released 2 NGO targeted RFAs (Community Mobilization and Social Protection) of which it appears that the RFA designs differed greatly. Feedback provided from participating NGOs indicated that the Community Mobilization RFA was more prescriptive in terms of targeting, activities, timeframes, etc., as compared to the Social Protection RFA, which was significantly more open ended in these and other areas. The opinions were mixed over preferences, however it appears that most NGOs would prefer something in the middle of both extremes. The NGOs expressed that in general, it is easier to respond to the more prescriptive RFA design, but the level of prescriptiveness limited their ability to be more creative based on their individual experiences. It appears that the broad variation in RFA designs was directly related to WGCMI's extensive experience associated to community mobilization initiatives as compared to its limited operational track record in the sphere of social protection.

There were also concerns raised by many of the NGOs that the initial Community Mobilization design was not realistic in terms of expected outputs, timing and resource allocation. This is primarily due to the fact that most of the NGOs were not familiar with WGCMI's rapid mobilization strategy, and that many of the NGO's methodologies are based on extended contact with communities. It should be noted that the NGOs that actually won the mobilization contracts believe more (now than before) in the process being implemented, but are still interested in extending the timeframe of interventions.

In terms of both RFAs, several NGOs expressed their concerns about WGCMI's experience and knowledge related to contextual and sectoral issues which influence the overall RFA designs. Although this observation is subject to debate, it does appear that design of future RFAs would benefit from more external consultation, especially in sectoral areas that are relatively new to WGCMI (e.g. social protection, income generation, agriculture, advocacy, etc.)

Recommendations:

- (1) As part of the design of future RFAs, engage technical support from international NGOs present in the country with specific experience related to the proposed subject matter. WGCMI staff should not be expected to develop the technical sectoral aspects of RFAs independently.
- (2) As above, explore mechanisms to obtain input from the local NGO community as part of the preparation of future RFA designs. This can possibly be done through inviting all interested NGOs to an open forum where they can provide their ideas and opinions related to an upcoming RFA. It is extremely important that none of the potentially applying NGOs obtain a competitive advantage through the information gathering process.
- (3) Considering engaging the services of consultants for the design of new RFAs if the international and local NGOs can not provide enough direction or support. This is especially important for unique topics, such as Advocacy.

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- (4) As part of the future design of RFA, WGCMI senior managers should attempt obtain information related to other social protection, agriculture, advocacy & civil society programs potentially implemented by CARE in the Balkans and other countries.
- (5) Prior to the release of the next Community Mobilization RFA, undertake a assessment meeting with current NGO grant recipients to determine potential modifications in design. In addition, consider adding MP monitoring to the RFA design. This will address the NGO concerns of extending contact with communities while maintaining the rapid mobilization strategy as well as potentially reduce the workload on the WGCMI mobilization and grant management teams.
- (6) Prior to releasing the next Community Mobilization RFA, organize site visits for interested NGOs to either WGCMI or NGO mobilized communities in an effort to demonstrate to applying NGOs that the modality/strategy proposed in the RFA is realistic and does function well. This will provide the NGOs a better opportunity to visualize the process and decide whether they want to invest the resources in preparing a proposal.
- (7) Prior to releasing the next Community Mobilization RFA, attempt to schedule the initiation of the grant activities so they will not conflict with seasonal agricultural activities. (The last Community Mobilization grants began in March)
- (8) It may be worth considering specific contextual difference between regions in future RFAs designs. For example the allocation of resources that reflect the distances between villages or aspects of remoteness that may vary region to region
- (9) Attempt to achieve greater balance between being too prescriptive or too vague in the RFA designs. The above recommendations should yield improvements on this issue.
- (10) Given that WGCMI has become the major (possibly only) funding source for local NGOs in western Georgia, it should attempt to communicate its RFA strategy over the next 2 years (approximate number of RFAs, potential sectors, target areas, average timeframe for grants, etc) to the local NGO community. This will help support LNGOs by ensuring that the NGOs understand the “big picture” of funding opportunities, and allow them to define their own strategy for responding to upcoming RFAs. Once this is defined and documented, it can be added to the WGCMI web site and included in the next newsletter.

**3.2 Assess and revise the RFA proposal guidelines and development process.**

Observations: In general terms, the NGOs interviewed who participated in the proposal development process indicated that the proposal guidelines were clear, but the

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preparation of proposals was difficult and time consuming. Many respondents mentioned particular difficulties understanding budget and the series of attachments. All respondents indicated that beyond the initial clarification meeting, there was an ongoing need for further clarifications during the proposal development process, and at times, it was difficult to obtain additional clarifications on a timely basis.

**Recommendations:**

- (1) Based on the experience to date, the Grant Management Team should implement a review of the RFA guidelines in an effort to clarify or simplify the documentation. This can be initiated through a 1 day meeting with Grant Officers and selected NGO representatives who had participated in the proposal process to identify problematic areas within the documentation. Ideally, WGCMI should identify a local consultant with experience in proposal documentation (bilingual if possible) to lead the process, propose modifications and affect the final changes to the RFA guidelines. Potentially WGCMI could identify a local consultant through Save the Children, which has significant experience in umbrella grant management in Georgia
- (2) Consider providing a generic in-depth training to interested NGOs on the WGCMI RFA guidelines. This may reduce the time investment on providing future clarifications over the longer term.
- (3) In an effort to provide equal access to information, WGCMI should consider organizing 2-3 information/clarification meetings for all interested NGOs participating in the RFA process. Ideally, the first information session would be undertaken one week after the release of the RFA in order to provide any clarifications that would allow the NGOs to better decide whether they want to respond to the RFA. Three weeks after the release of the RFA, a second clarification would be held to provide consultations on the preparation of the proposal and then a final clarification meeting to be held 1 week prior to proposal submission.

This would eliminate any possible accusations that any given NGO received more assistance than others in the preparation of their proposals, and the also free up time of GOs who will no longer attend to frequent ad hoc consultations during the 6 week RFA process.

- (4) Given the growing volume of RFAs over the next 2 years, WGCMI may want to consider assigning 1-2 Grant Officers on a full-time basis to oversee the RFA release and submission process under the direct guidance of the Grant Manager. In this manner, these GOs will become resident experts on the RFA process.

**3.3 Assess and revise the RFA review and approval process**

**Observations:** There is a need to strengthen the overall process/procedures utilized for selecting grant recipients (or more importantly deselecting the losers) and the

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methodology used for communicating the final results of the RFA grant competition. Although the selection process appears to be managed professionally, in an unbiased manner, the methodology utilized for communicating the results to non-winners did not reflect the level of professionalism invested into the entire process. For example; a large number NGOs not selected were informed that one of the primary reasons they were not chosen as a grant recipient was based on their “lack of experience”. The concept of rejection based on insufficient experience is extremely subjective, especially when WGCMI did not visit the NGO offices or their respective project activities prior to determining that the NGOs in question lacked the appropriate experience. To add insult to injury, the NGOs rejected (in Samegrelo) compared their rejection letters and found them to be the same form letter that did not adequately detail the actual reason for not winning the grant competition.

It should be noted that the winning NGOs were chosen based on the submission of the strongest proposals, and all others were objectively deselected due to weaknesses in their project designs/proposals (irregardless of their supposed lack of experience). However, the selected justifications communicated to participants of the grant competition had compromised the overall process.

#### Recommendations:

- (1) WGCMI should eliminate the concept to “sufficient experience” from the selection criteria, or it must establish a credible and objective system for assessing experience levels. If it plans to continue using this concept as a selection criterion, then it should advise NGOs in advance (through pre-qualification and/or short-listing methodologies) whether they possess “sufficient experience” prior to investing significant time and resources in developing an RFA response.
- (2) WGCMI Grant Management Team should review its established RFA review policies and procedures and ensure that they are strictly followed. According to the guidelines, visits to NGOs submitting proposals should have been undertaken. Based on experience to date, the Grant Team should also consider modifying the grant review guidelines to reflect the reality (including staffing and time limitations) of the future review process.
- (3) Given the amount of time and effort dedicated by NGOs toward the development of proposals, WGCMI should extend the courtesy of a separate formal debriefing session with each NGO in order to provide the opportunity to discuss the strengths and weaknesses in their proposals. This should be treated as a capacity building/educational process to improve the quality of subsequent RFA submissions (and not be treated as a required formality).
- (4) After the feedback sessions, WGCMI should provide each participating NGO with a formal letter detailing the reasons why they were not selected as a grant recipient and encourage them to apply for future RFA competitions.

### **3.4 General issues related to RFA process**

#### Observations/Recommendations:

- It is worth noting that although many NGO representatives were frustrated by some weaknesses in the initial RFA designs, aspects of documentation, communication procedures, etc., most have indicated that the overall process has improved between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> RFA cycles. In cases where NGOs opted not to apply for WGCMI grants, the reasons cited were focused on issues of internal capacity to respond, or waiting for a future RFA with a different sector focus (e.g. health, agriculture, etc.). None of the respondents indicated that they would not apply to future WGCMI RFAs due to its previous track record.
- WGCMI should consider the possibility designing a RFA focusing on Conflict Resolution in an effort bridge the collaboration gaps that exist between ethnic groups within communities and between the regions within the WGCMI target area.
- Given the opening of new satellite offices, WGCMI should establish a mechanism for allowing RFA proposals to be submitted regionally instead of requiring the NGOs to formally submit in Kutaisi.
- WGCMI should begin investigating opportunities/mechanisms for linking participating NGOs to alternative RFA and other funding mechanisms. (Soros, Eurasia Foundation, etc.) The program should not wait until the last year of operations to initiate this process.

### **4.0 Health and Social Welfare Component**

Observations: The HSW component implemented in collaboration between CARE and IMC had faced difficulties in defining the overall role of HSW within the WGCMI program (specifically related to issues of technical support toward the development and monitoring of MPs). A change in IMC leadership/technical support for the HSW component of WGCMI has resulted in a shift in focus that is now culminating with the finalization of a new HSW strategy. The new strategy centers on improving the capacity local authorities to provide very basic of health and social services, through the provision of training and activity support (via a series of NGO RFAs) as well as monitoring. In addition, the HSW unit attempts to provide basic guidelines/assistance (to a lesser extent than before) toward MPs developed within this sector.

Given the size and capacity of the IMC team and the content of the revised strategy, it is not likely that the HSW unit will be in the position to provide significant technical support to the Mobilization Team toward the development and monitoring of MPs in the

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short-to-medium term. The focus on infrastructure related MPs has limited the potential role and impact associated to improved services under the HSW component. It is also questionable whether it is realistic to rely on the HSW team to support technical aspects toward health (related) interventions such as water system rehab and ambulatories.

Based on the above, the Mobilization team will more likely be the best mechanism to integrate HSW issues within the community mobilization initiatives and MPs. For instance, regardless of the type of MP, the HSW team could develop a standard package of IEC materials to be disseminated in all WGCMI communities. The materials can be used during community mobilization training and follow-up strategic planning activities in order to promote these issues. To be realistic, it is not likely that the HWS team itself (given its human resource limitations) will be in the position to provide direct training to communities.

Recommendations:

- (1) The HSW team should focus on implementing their new/overall strategy and be much less involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of individual MPs. Based on the coordination between the HSW Coordinator and Community Mobilization Manager, the HSW team should continue to help define specific guidelines to support MPs (e.g. developing the “Essential Equipment List for Primary Health Care Facilities” or basic guidelines for water and sanitation as a standard part of school rehabilitations which can be used by CMs and the MP Review Committee).
- (2) WGCMI needs to define what is HSW and what are HSW interventions at the community level. For example it is questionable whether the HSW team should be involved with Schools as they (schools), are technically not part of Health or Social Welfare.
- (3) Once the Social Welfare aspect is defined within WGCMI, the HSW team could play a key role in identifying potential SW interventions, find illustrative examples and facilitate cross-visits for WGCMI staff to improve their ability to understand and disseminated these concepts to participating communities.
- (4) Emphasis should be placed on researching and identify working models for the sustainability of Social Protection intervention to be implemented under WGCMI (e.g. allocations of state funds, internal income generation, etc.), otherwise on going sustainability will not be realistic.
- (5) IMC staff would greatly benefit from more training on issues related to Social Welfare, IEC,, Public Health and Environmental Health if they are expected to assist WGCMI staff in these areas.
- (6) As noted above, the HSW component should create a standard package of IEC to be used with all communities regardless of MP selection. The idea would be to disseminate this information directly to community member as opposed to only

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concentrating on health officials. The HSW team could provide more intensive training to the WGCMI mobilization staff in concepts/methodologies of IEC and the subject matter of the standard package.

- (7) HSW team should finalize the IMC \$165,000 in-kind match contribution of medical equipment, and coordinate (plan) the distributions with the Mobilization team. Ideally, it would be best to allocate items to ambulatories already rehabilitated by WGCMI and allocate the balance of items to new ambulatory projects over the next 2 years as part of enhancing services to the community.
- (8) WGCMI should seriously consider a implementing a monthly HSW status review meeting (IMC HSW Coordinator/Technical Advisor, COP, CMM and GM) to openly discuss progress, pending issues, problems and future plans.

#### **5.0 Social Policy Initiatives Group (SPIG)**

Observations: WGCMI is attempting to integrate social policy issue coordination and information dissemination among program stakeholders (CBOs, communities and local NGOs in western Georgia). The program has developed a partnership with Horizonti (a local NGO) who is currently responsible disseminating information within western Georgia on policy reform issues and conducting information gathering in an effort to influence key decision makers in Gov't on policy reform issues. Previous to initiating SPIG in western Georgia, Horizonti, began their social policy activities in eastern Georgia in coordination with Mercy Corps (MC). The activities in western Georgia are directly based on Horizonti's experience in the east.

There are problematic issues related to the current implementation of this component. Horizonti just recently established an operating presence in west Georgia and is now attempting to replicate its activities previously implemented in the east. There is a perception on the behalf of Horizonti that WGCMI is resistant to support the SPIG model, that WGCMI is not willing to take risks (as compared to MC) and WGCMI staff are too busy with other work interventions, as a result, the WGCMI staff are not actively involved in the SPIG information meetings implemented out in the regions and that SPIG is frustrated that WGCMI is not implementing more social protection MP interventions (example integrating disabled children into public schools).

WGCMI's perspective is that the SPIG model does not support WGCMI's interests in promoting the Social Policy at the community level, that WGCMI staff has only been used as logisticians to organize meetings for Horizonti, and WGCMI field staff question the capacity levels of the SPIG team, and as a result, they are very hesitant to get involved. Although the collaboration moves ahead, the partnership is stressed, and there is no common vision as to the final objectives of SPIG within WGCMI.

A significant stumbling block is the on-going comparison between previous work (and identified "successes") in the east as compared to the current situation in the west. It is

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necessary to acknowledge that the operational structure between EGCM and WGCMI are distinct. For example in the east the working relationships were more geared toward local NGOs, whereas in the west there has been a stronger focus on directly working with Community Based Organizations (CBOs). In terms of Horizonti's disillusionment about the number of community projects implemented related to social welfare/protection between the east vs. the west, one needs to take into consideration that the participating NGOs in the east "may" have already had an organizational focus in these social welfare issues, whereas in the west the community based participatory process for identifying problems have not yielded the same priorities. For these reasons, it is difficult to make direct comparisons between programs.

It is also clear that although the WGCMI staff had received theoretical training on concepts of social policy, advocacy, etc., there is a significant knowledge gap related to how they are supposed to apply these concepts at the community level. There also appears to be a lack of common vision/operational goals between the 2 teams related to the expected outputs of SPIG within WGCMI. While the SPIG team have already set activity plans for data collection meetings, analysis and formation of Social Policy Working Groups (SPWGs), etc., the WGCMI staff do not understand how these activities contribute to integrating social policy issues and advocacy within their community mobilization initiative.

Recommendations:

- (1) WGCMI and Horizonti should contract the services of an external consultant to facilitate a process to develop a common vision for SPIG within WGCMI.
- (2) WGCMI should consider contracting the services of Gary Forbes to undertake and situational/operational analysis of SPIG in terms of WGCMI in order to develop a modified strategy and operational plan for the next 2 years related to the structural differences of WGCMI and EGCM. (Note: the recommendation for this particular consultant is based on his past role related to SPIG in east Georgia.)
- (3) SPIG should provide (potentially through external sources) more intensive training to WGCMI staff members related to how to apply the theory (Social Policy, Advocacy, etc.), within WGCMI communities. In addition, given the focus on social welfare issues, WGCMI should request that SPIG arranges further practical trainings by social welfare specialists.
- (4) WGCMI, SPIG and MCI should arrange structured cross-visits between the east and west for field staff. The cross-visits should be tied to specific learning objectives.
- (5) Once staff are sufficiently oriented and trained, WGCMI should endeavor to integrate social policy information dissemination and promote community action

through regular monitoring visits, scheduled community development training and the 6 month community strategic planning sessions.

- (6) Given that most of WGCMI's current communities have already identified their priorities which do not happen to coincide with SPIG's identified social policy priorities in the realm of social protection (e.g. assistance to the disabled and institutionalized), it is not likely that CBOs will choose to use WGCMI MP funds these types of social protection interventions. Taking this into consideration, SPIG may want to create a special fund for "mini projects" in which selected communities have the opportunity to implement social protection interventions without sacrificing WGCMI financing for predetermined priorities.
- (7) For the development of SPWGs, WGCMI may want to consider piloting the development of district level groups as opposed to regional level groups. Given the distances and geographic differences between (and within) regions, this may be a more functional approach to facilitate on-going contact and the identification of common social policy issues.
- (8) Given the successes of SPIG in the east, begin piloting their approach working with local NGOs with WGCMI RFA grant recipients.

## **6.0 Additional Community Project Development Issues**

### **6.1 Development of formalized Urban Strategy**

Observations: WGCMI has been primarily operating within rural areas of western Georgia, but has also implemented a limited number of activities in urban district centers. There is growing interest among local authorities (and WGCMI field staff) to expand MP/SP development activities in urban centers. The rationale presented for further expansion of WGCMI activities to urban centers is that: (1) urban centers also consist of large numbers of vulnerable populations, (2) limited availability of basic service provision and (3) surrounding villages rely on urban centers for provision of basic and social services. Recently there has been increasing pressure on WGCMI to enter into larger scale infrastructure projects with municipalities of larger urban centers (especially in the city of Kutaisi). As a result of this surging interest of municipal authorities to tap into the WGCMI funding umbrella, it is now time for the program to officially define its urban strategy in an effort to clearly articulate policies to municipal and district stakeholders. A defined urban strategy (detailing its methodology and targeting) will also protect WGCMI from continued pressure from municipal authorities, especially in larger urban centers.

Typically the rural areas continue to be underserved in terms of state sponsored investment as well as the provision of on-going services (e.g. education, health, transport, etc.) compared to the larger urban centers such as Kutaisi, Zudidi, Batumi, etc. In addition, local NGOs involved in the provision of social protection activities tend to be more active in larger urban centers as well. Taking into consideration the modality of WGCMI's mobilization initiatives (e.g. working through Community Based

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Organizations), significant expansion into urban centers would most likely require the development of alternative mobilization strategies due to the specific different social and cultural intricacies between urban and rural communities. Due to these difference associated to urban and rural operating environments, urban targeted developmental interventions tend to be implemented as separate programs. Given WGCMI's targets for the coming 2 years and the higher demand in rural areas, the timing is not appropriate for a significant expansion of MP and SP activities in larger urban centers.

#### **Recommendations:**

- (1) Do not attempt to implement infrastructure projects in larger urban cities (Kutaisi, Zudidi, Batumi, etc.) These municipalities have more access to alternative funding mechanisms, but choose to use their resources for other purposes. WGCMI is not the appropriate funding source for subsidizing public works in these urban centers.
- (2) In an effort to support needs in district centers (Abasha, Bagdadi, Lanchkuti, Khoni, etc.) consider targeting specific NGO RFAs (e.g. Social Protection & Income Generation) at this level of urban centers. Attempt to capitalize on the experience and existing capacity of local NGOs in these areas.
- (3) WGCMI should attempt to minimize (not eliminate) supporting infrastructure related MPs in smaller urban centers and increase focus on the support of improved service provision in urban areas to populations in surrounding villages.
- (4) WGCMI should finalize/document (1-2 pages maximum) an urban strategy and post it the web page. Field staff should provide a copy of the strategy to the Municipalities of larger cities, and use it as a means to avoid being pressured by urban authorities on implementing inappropriate MPs. (for example: repaving streets in affluent areas, building new football stadiums, etc.)

## **6.2 Diversification of Project Types and Micro-Project Activities**

Observations: To date, the vast majority of MPs have focused on the rehabilitation of primary infrastructure (ambulatories, schools, water systems, roads, etc.), which had been identified as priorities by participating communities. Although this may not have been anticipated in the original design of WGCMI, the intensive focus on physical rehabilitation makes perfect sense due to the long-term absence of maintenance and investment made toward these quasi communal/government assets.

In the case of water systems, roads, electric systems, the repair activities typically result with immediate and noticeable impact associated to the improvement of primary service provision. However, in terms of rehabilitation works associated to schools, ambulatories, cultural centers and other types of "structures/buildings" repairs, the impact related to provision of "improved services" is not as pronounced. For example repairing roofs, windows, door, wall, etc. of any given building does significantly improve the

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physical conditions for those who work in the improved environment (e.g. doctors & teachers) and for those who use the services within the enhanced physical setting (e.g. patients & students), but physical repairs alone do not necessarily improve the provision of services to end-users. It is not uncommon to find an ambulatory or school that has been successfully rehabilitated, but continues to lack basic equipment/furniture which is required to affect a noticeable improvement in service provision. The primary reason for this is related to limitations in budgets and/or MP restrictions on the procurement of equipment. In addition, the methodologies developed to ensure the future maintenance and ongoing utilization of the community asset is often weak, and does not adequately address functional mechanisms for systematically raising resources to guarantee long-term viability of service provision.

Another issue of concern is the tendency for communities to jump from one infrastructure initiative to another, without fully addressing other aspects of service provision related to a particular priority problem the community has partially addressed through structural repairs.

There is also a growing demand for alternative types of projects related to agriculture, income generation schemes, etc. But CBOs tend to be more focused on reactivating collective farms (e.g. tea plantations), small factories, etc. in an effort to create employment opportunities. Although these interventions theoretically could directly address one of the root of vulnerability (lack of sufficient incomes), it does raise serious issues and concerns related to their ability to develop and administer businesses and how they manage providing benefits to a limited number community residents without creating conflict.

**Recommendations:**

- (1) WGCMI should reconsider the concept of allowing the inclusion of equipment as part of infrastructure rehabilitation activities. For example, the HSW team has already produced a “List of Essential Equipment for Primary Health Care Facilities”. This could be used as a guideline the inclusion of basic items in ambulatory MPs. In addition, procure basic teaching equipment and tools as part of a school rehabilitation to enhance the ability teachers to educate their students
- (2) Consider designing initial infrastructure MPs in 2 phases to address interests in physical repairs and post rehabilitation service provision. Under this scenario MP# 1 would focus on repairs and MP#2 could potentially focus on equipment provision, technical training, cross-visits, establishment of new/improves services, etc.
- (3) Consider income generation activities for CBOs to support the financial sustainability of MPs, while addressing other priorities identified by the community. For example, if a given community had identified local transport to district centers as a primary problem, the CBO could implement a MP to repair a non-functioning microbus, and organize transport service for community

members. A major part of this intervention would be setting-up functional management systems to ensure the on-going provision of services and a transparent financial reporting system to the community to ensure the proper utilization of resources. The CBO could then use any profits (beyond covering operational costs and future repairs) to support community activities

Other types of interventions under this methodology could be small scale production, establishing a communal milling/grinding services, tractor rental services, etc. It is important to remember that any type of intervention identified need to be technically or administratively manageable for the CBO.

- (4) Pilot agricultural/income generation related MPs through NGO RFAs. Given WGCMI's limited technical expertise in these sectoral areas, it would be better to capitalize on the experience and existing capacity of local NGOs in these areas.

### **6.3 Concerns about Taxation**

Observations: Recently, the Central Tax Authority in Imereti has begun targeting WGCMI MP funding as a new potential source of "state" revenue. More specifically, they are requesting information about WGCMI recipients in order to collect taxes from service providers hired by CBOs. There have been concerns raised by the staff about whether it is appropriate for WGCMI to provide this type of information, the need to increase MP budgets to cover the additional tax liabilities of CBOs, the availability of original receipts within the CBO's financial books, modification of clauses (and language) in CBO contracts & MP financial documentation, etc. Although several CBOs did raise this as potential problematic issue, none had indicated that taxation would not prevent them from participation in WGCMI. Currently the pressure from the tax authorities has not yet become an issue in Samgerlo and Guria.

WGCMI management has responded to these concerns by engaging the services of tax lawyers, informing CBOs of their respective tax liabilities related to WGCMI, modifying CBO contracts related to this issue and tax law training for WGCMI staff members.

#### Recommendations:

- (1) The WGCMI staff should attempt to respond to the tax issue in a strategic and calm manner. They are very nervous about what "may" happen, but up until now there have been no major ramifications of the current tax related issues.
- (2) Although the Central Tax Authority in Imereti has informed WGCMI about the national tax laws, in most areas where WGCMI implements MPs/SPs, it is the District Level Tax Authorities who are responsible for enforcing tax collection. It appears that the tax laws are interpreted and implemented differently within the varying districts. In the event that the local tax authorities begin to intervene with any given CBO, WGCMI Grant Officers should visit with the local tax authorities

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- to explain WGCMI goals, objectives and activities and lobby for flexibility on their behalf in order to maximize the direct cash transfer to community MPs.
- (3) WGCMI should keep the CBOs informed of any further changes in their tax liability related to their participation in the program.
  - (4) WGCMI should not increase MP budget allocations to cover the value of tax liabilities of service providers. According to one CBO chairman well versed in tax issues, even if a CBO provides information about amounts paid to service providers, the value of the 1<sup>st</sup> and possibly 2<sup>nd</sup> contract with that specific service provider would not be taxed.
  - (5) MP contracts, budgets and community contribution documentation should clearly identify/define any in-kind contributions to avoid any confusion with the tax authorities.
  - (6) WGCMI should monitor this situation carefully, and use the services of a reliable tax lawyer prior to taken any actions related to WGCMI policies on taxation.
  - (7) In the event that CBOs can not find service providers willing to participate in the MP and/or the amounts become excessive for the size of MP funding, consider the possibility of negotiating tax exemptions and consider the exemption as part of local authority contributions to the MP.

**7.0 Other General issues**

- (1) Allow the CBOs to purchase from Individual Enterprises which can produce an official identity code. An official stamp should not be required.
- (2) In the event that WGCMI modifies any of its policies, criteria, etc. do not retroactively apply those changes to projects that have already been approved (e.g. have signed contracts).
- (3) Undertake a survey of how many CBO members were elected to local authority posts in the last election. Try to identify what influences (if any) WGCMI had on the final outcome of the elections. Highlight this issue in next Semi-Annual Report
- (4) WGCMI senior managers should attempt to provide refresher training and identify cross- visit opportunities for their respective staff in order to enhance their capacity and expose them to new ideas.
- (5) Review CBO/NGO Handbook(s) and determine any required changes based on experience to date. Consider moving procurement policies/procedures to the first section of the manual to highlight its importance.

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- (6) Improve the knowledge of Grant Officers on USAID compliance issues.

## **7.0 Follow-up to Review**

It is suggested that the following steps be taken in an effort to operationalize accepted recommendations in the report:

- (1) The senior management team (COP, CMM & GM) should select the relevant sections this report for all staff distribution as soon as possible. These sections should be translated (externally or internally) and proof read by the WGCMI Liaison Officer for clarity and accuracy prior to general distribution..
- (2) WGCMI should organize a 2 day strategic planning workshop with a smaller sub group of the entire staff (preferably the stronger conceptually thinkers) to discuss the findings and select which of the recommendations will be implemented. This proposed event should be facilitated by the AMD-P or a local consultant in order to allow all senior WGCMI managers to directly participate in the process.
- (3) The above workshop should culminate with a written action plan which will identify selected actions, responsible individuals and proposed completion dates. The WGCMI Liaison Officer should be responsible for reporting monthly progress of the action plan to the WGCMI Senior Management Team until all actions have been completed.